

EXCITEMENT CITY UNLIMITED

#13

September 21st, 1988

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Don't vote GOP

This issue is, as they say in Britain, small but perfectly formed. With the GMAT looming, my revision has hit overdrive and you're the ones who have to suffer for it. Or not, as the case may be. Next time I may do a bumper issue spanning 16 pages and containing zine reviews, several months of backlogged letters, articles (remember them?) and even another recipe. I bet you can't wait.

The hot gossip on the ISE front is that Chris Carrier has bravely volunteered to take over this all-important hobby office. As Sacksy would say, comments on the above nomination are solicited. However the final choice on my successor is mine all mine, so don't expect me to take any notice of what you do say. If anyone else is interested in taking over let me know fairly soon. I'll make my final decision in January when I publish my final issue of As The Pound In Your Pocket... Until then keep sending me the cheques.

Meanwhile the Australian ISE rep, Andrew England, has drastically cut down on his hobby commitments. He hasn't said anything to me about the ISE so I'm assuming that he intends to carry on. However, in case he does want out, I'd be interested to hear from any Australians who would be interested in taking over.

Finally Randy Ben Grigsby Israel (or something like that...) called me some time ago to volunteer as a Canadian rep for the International Subscription Exchange. Since Canadian and US banks are becoming more picky about exchanging Canadian and US currency and cheques, there seems to be more need for an ISE-type service between Canada and the US. If Canadian publishers are having problems cashing US dollar cheques, I'd gladly take Randy aboard the ISE to circumvent this problem. Is anyone interested?

Here's a question for all you Praxis fans out there. I've recently completed my collection of early Praxes by grabbing Paul Gardner's collection at Tomatocon. However I have a small problem. Admidst the issues is a single sheet which must have fallen off the back of one of the zines. On one side is the Runestone '86 ballot and on the other is "The Withering Away" discussing the Poll. Does anyone know which issue it belongs to?

Enclosed this issue is a Rusty Bolts' ballot. All publicity is welcome.

EXCITEMENT CITY UNLIMITED is typed by somebody who is probably more tired of algebra than you can possibly imagine. It is published by Simon Billenness, 630 Victory Blvd. Apt. 6F, Staten Island, NY 10301, USA. ECU costs you 75¢ if you live in the Americas and \$1 if you're sensible enough to reside elsewhere. Meat is Murder. Washington Up Against The Wall.

EXCITORIAL: WORLD DIP CON 1990

Since Larry Peery has decided not to make Dipcon '89 in Los Angeles the first North American World Dip Con, we ought to consider when and where the next World Dip Con will be held. The overwhelming consensus of British hobbyists likely to attend was that they needed two years to save up for a trip to the USA. Besides, a two year wait was felt essential to make the event "special" enough to attract gamers from overseas. After all there's not much point holding a World Dip Con if no foreigners turn up! Consequently, the general consensus is that the North American World Dip Con will take place in 1990.

Before deciding where exactly the con will be held, I think it would be useful to consider what is required for an event of this sort. I reckon there are three basic preconditions for a successful World Dip Con.

1. A Good Turnout

The North American hobby is too fragmented geographically to rival the record attendance of 330 at the British World Dip Con. Frankly, if the turnout is as small as Dipcon '88 in Texas, which was a dismal 35 or so, any international attendees are going to be badly disappointed. A turnout of around 100 with enough big names should be sufficient. This should be within the capabilities of a con with a good local base, provided the two conditions below are met.

2. Advance Booking

The con organisers need to have firm dates by January. Most European and Australian hobbyists will be over for their vacations, not just an extended weekend. Consequently they need to know well in advance so that they can arrange the time off work. The dates must be fixed. We can't afford a repeat of the 1987 Dipcon when the dates were changed after the initial publicity, which threw several people's plans in disarray.

3. International Publicity

Needless to say, the con needs plenty of publicity in Europe and Australia, particularly around December 89/January 90 when hobbyists are starting to think about their summer vacations. I'm willing to be drafted onto any con committee to coordinate this.

I reckon any well-organised con in a heavily populated area should be able to attract 50-75 people. If the con has the added prestige of being World Dip Con (and, most probably, Dipcon also) that should be enough to guarantee an attendance of 100 North Americans and about 10 gamers from overseas.

At the moment I can see three possible locations for World Dip Con 1990. Cancon in Toronto has been mentioned by Alan Stewart as a possible Dipcon site. However attendance this year was on the low side and it is uncertain whether enough Americans would be willing to trek to Canada. Dixiecon in North Carolina is another candidate for Dipcon 1990, but again it is still principally local and may have trouble attracting gamers from all over the Eastern Seaboard. There is a Diplomatic Congress planned in Philadelphia which would be a good central location. The con committee seems fairly experienced (Robert Sacks, Brad Wilson, Woody) but I'm not sure if they would want to bid for Dipcon too, and the title may well be necessary to draw enough gamers from the rest of the country. Unfortunately, in the absence of a large, long-running convention in America, a consensus on the site is essential for a successful World Dip Con. I'm willing to discuss this at length in ECU. Would it be too much to ask that the North American hobby put aside bad feelings and pull together on this one?

THE GAMES

WILLIAM RUFUS DEVANE KING

AUTUMN 1911

Barbary Jake Walters

f mao-eng, f bre s f mao-eng, f lpl hold, f por s a tun-spa, a tun-spa,
f wms c a tun-spa, a mor-alg

France Jeff Hoffman

a par-bur

Germany Mike Pustilnik

f wal-lpl, f cly s f wal-lpl, f eng-bre, f nth-eng, f hol-bel, a bur-par,
a gas s a bur-par, a ruh-bur, a sev-arm, a geo s a sev-arm, a kaz-irn,
a ukr-sev, a tri-ven, a pie s a tri-ven, a tyr s a pie, a bud-ser,
a rum s a ukr-sev, a sil-gal, a gal-vie

Italy Robert Acheson

a mar-pie, f tus s a mar-pie, a ven s a mar-pie, a rom s a ven,
f adr s a ven

Persia John Crosby

a arm-geo, a irq-arm, f bla s a irq-arm, a irn-kaz, a afg s a irn-kaz,
f red-egy, f ind-irnsc, f gol s Italian a mar-pie, f aeg-con

Russia Bob Gossage

a ser s German a bud-ser, (huh?) a alb s a ser, a rum s a ser (no such unit),
a bul holds unordered

Retreats: French a par-pic/otb

German a kaz-mos/otb, f eng-iri/lon/pic/otb, a pie destroyed

Barbary f lpl-iri/nao/otb

Adjustments

B: 6: mor, alg, can, por, ~~lpl~~, bre, tun remove one or no change

F: 0: ~~par~~

G: 21: kie, mun, ber, bel, vie, den, nwy, hol, edi, stp, ~~pie~~, swe, tri, ven,
lon, war, sev, mos, bud, rum +lpl, +par build two or three

I: 6: rom, nap, cor, spa, mar +pie build one

P: 9: ara, jor, ira, eth, egy, smy, cre, ank, con no change

R: 3: ser, bul, gre no change

PRESS

Germany-France: Whether my move on Paris this turn works or not, I would
like to congratulate you on a good game!

Gamenotes

Deadline: Saturday, October 22nd 1988

This was a very interesting season to GM; I guess there's still life in
the game yet. However we have two endgame proposals:

1) Barbary/French/German/Italian/Persian/Russian draw

2) Barbary/German/Italian/Persian/Russian draw

Please vote yes or no with your next set of orders.

Bob asks how many centres Germany needs to win and the answer is 23...

SMOKINGGUNIGUESSISHOWEDHERRIGHTNEXTDOOR(Becauseofme)NOTHIN" BUTAWOMANSTILLAROU

We saw a great triple bill at a cinema on Staten Island: A Fish Called Wanda

Betrayed

Bambi

WAITING LISTS

Stab: Derwood Bowen, Glenn Petroski, Brad Wilson, Tom Nash, Jake Walters

Stab is an interesting hidden movement version of Diplomacy. Only contested moves are reported. Players have to keep track of their own units and guess about the whereabouts of their opponents'. This is not a game for paranoids! Player identities are common knowledge though unlike Gunboat (hawk, spit...) No gamefee. Rules available on request. Two wanted.

Oh yeah, Tom, I need your preference list.

RAILWAY RUSHES: Paul Gardner, Doug Brown, Theo Clarke

Map I (Ireland) GM: Brian Longstaff 2 wanted. This is a Railway Rivals variant.

International Diplomacy: Mark Weidmark (Canada)

Again no gamefee is required for this one. This game will be GMed by Mark Nelson (assuming he ever sends me his proposed houserules) or some other outside GM. I'm especially looking for players from Europe and Australia.

Standbys

All Purpose: Doug Brown, Mark Lilleleht, Mike Pustilnik

Cline 9: Jake Walters

International Dip: Bill Young, Martin Kloosterman, Robert Acheson,
Mike Gonsalves, Ian Whitchurch, Brad Wilson

Downfall: John Dods, Mark Weseman, Ian Whitchurch, Jason Bergmann,
Brad Wilson

Railway Rivals: Paul Gardner

Standbys are always actively recruited. Some more than others. For merely signing up, you receive one free issue straight away. If you submit standby orders which are used, you receive three further free issues. Join now!

I especially need standbys for my Cline 9 games!!!

PARADISEWEIRDOASITISWHENITWASBROKENPROMISEWAYOFLIFE BIZARRELOVETRIANGLEALLDAYL

independent deadline games

artichoke hearts: Cline 9 Person Diplomacy (International), Spring 1903

braised celery: Downfall of the Lord of the Rings, Afteryule 3019-1

spectreman: Railway Rivals, Map K. Round 5

attack of the killer tomatoes: Railway Rivals, Map N. Round 1

frankie's freaks: Railway Rivals, Map T. Starting

Also Bob Gossage's international Dip game should be starting soon. He rejected my suggestion of game name (Chopped Carrots) and, instead, he's apparently allowing the game to named by the players, whatever that entails. The mind boggles...

THE LAST TOMATOCON

Did I say last issue that I hate to write con reports? Yeah, and I'll never mention Bruce Geryk again either...

I'm glad to say that I made all three Tomatocons. The first time I travelled travelled*there and back by coach. The second time Barbara and I accepted a lift up from Bob Slossar, who figured that arguing with a radical vegetarian and a yuppie socialist would be enough to keep him awake for the entire trip. After several hours of amusing debate and a Twilight-Zone encounter in the service-station-with-no-exit, we arrived in a very foggy Newfane (population: 4) around three in the morning. This year we decided to make the journey in a more leisurely manner. By taking the Friday off work, we were able to hit the road by 9.30am, neatly avoiding any snarl-ups and finally arriving at Paul Gardner's place around 3.30 (in the afternoon this time).

Yup, this con report is going to ramble too...

There was not much going on when we arrived. Studiously engaged in a game of Empire Builder were Mike Barno, John Rigley, Russ Rusnak and a former church-person from Washington State whose name I forget. Some stranger stopped by and asked if we were still selling tomatoes after seeing the signposts to the con which Paul had set up along the street. Meanwhile Barbara misspelled my surname on the attendance sheet. Less people turned up this year but who misses Bruce Geryk anyway? (oops! that name again).

It turned out that we didn't play a single game until Saturday evening; we ate out with Gloria (a good friend of ours who we persuaded to come to the con) on the Friday and spent most of Saturday shopping in Brattleboro. Brattleboro is a charming town. The centre is little more than a mile of main street. However the population is an agreeable mixture of the original rural types, plus a few of the hippies-that-time-forgot and, more recently, yuppies. Consequently the town is probably a lot more cosmopolitan than most. American towns of its size, boasting such establishments as a sushi bar, a well-stocked health food store and a bustling vegetarian restaurant cum counter-cultural hang-out called Common Cause. The latter so impressed us that we ended up eating there twice in two days.

Ostensibly we only went out on Saturday to shop for food for the evening meal, which we had intended to cook. However we couldn't resist trawling the local clothes stores ending up with sweats, pants, a dress for Gloria and a couple of shirts. Eventually we made it to the supermarket, which, like the rest of the town, is full of all kinds of gourmet items including fresh thyme and oregano, a wine rack, an industrial-size ethnic section and more types of imported cheeses than the mind can comfortably comprehend. Back at the house we started work on a large portion of Cuban Beans and Rice partly to help to convert the heathen, meat-eating con attendees but mainly to provide us veggies with a wholesome, balanced meal.

As usual I steered clear of the more time-consuming, serious boardgames like Civilisation, Diplomacy and Empire Builder. These days I find that I prefer to play undemanding games which leave plenty of time for socialising. Survive is the quintessential sociable game with plenty of opportunities to stab other players in the back. It's amazing how much gratuitous pleasure Greenpeace supporters can get from harponing plastic whales. Modesty forbids me from mentioning who won this game hands down...

I also introduced Barbara, Gloria and Linda Courtemanche to the copy of Grass which I bought at World Dip Con. You may remember me waxing lyrical about

* intentional artistic repetition to suggest the tedium of the journey.

this highly amusing and skilful card game last issue. Barbara seemed to take to the game straight away winning the first set of hands. However I reckon that I did well to come second to Barbara and then win the second time around without ever receiving The Banker. I must also admit that it will be a long time before I forget the look on Gloria's when I abruptly closed the market while she still had Dr Feelgood in her hand...

This was the con where East Coast radical feminism clashed with Midwestern male chauvinism. Yup, we introduced Gloria to Russ Rusnak. Russ is a deep-down sexist and quite disturbingly proud of it. I have a grudging respect for his candour but after a while his loudly expressed views start to grate. However I still smile when I remember the exchange between him and Gloria on the Sunday night. Russ walked into the kitchen resplendent in his "One Tough Beaver" t-shirt looking for another beer. In response to yet another of Russ' off-colour comments, Gloria called him a misogynist only to discover that he didn't know what the word meant...

For me at least, cons like this are one of the reasons I enjoy the hobby so much. The common interest in games brings people together initially but after only a short time you find that you have many other interests in common. For instance somehow Barbara, Gloria, Linda and I got onto the subject of what liberal junk mail we had received recently followed by interesting comparison of which mailing lists we must be on. Some of the discussions were too risqué to put in No Fixed Address never mind ECU... We also enjoyed seeing another part of the country which we might not have visited on our own. Outside Brattleboro the countryside is a beautiful landscape of mist-covered hills, pine forests and babbling brooks. The trip certainly helped cement our desire to leave New York City in a few years time and settle in New England.

Unfortunately the next time we're in Brattleboro, we won't be at Tomatocon. Paul has moved out of home to be with Becky and I'm sure they will be very happy together. In any case Paul has found the organising a bit too much to handle comfortably while his father has grown tired of having his house overrun with gamers every year. Knowing the work involved I can completely understand their reasons. However the last Tomatocon is the end of an era, in my mind anyway. After taking photographs of all and sundry, including several of the old house, the trip back struck me as being a little sad.

NEXTYEARNEWYORKCITYCONATOURPLACEPERHAPSNEXTYEARNEWYORKCITYCONATOURPLACEPERHAPS

People are always asking me to review British zines, so here's some:

Between The Wars: Derek Sutherland, 108 Riccarton, Westwood 7, East Kilbride, Glasgow, G75 9BY, Scotland

This would be a good bet if you want a reliable zine since Derek has been around the British hobby for years; after producing 25 issues of BtW as a subzine to Prisoners of War, he certainly knows what he's doing. BtW is a jolly mix of political chat with a strong libertarian left-wing slant, some music reviews, a couple of Diplomacy games and a Touchdown! league. I'm surprised that nobody in America has started a Touchdown! game yet. After all there are a couple of soccer management games being run over here but, as yet, I've seen nobody try their hand at Touchdown!, a British-designed American football management simulation.

Mission From God: Iain Bowen, "Minas Morgul", 2 Elderberry Close, Norton, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY8 3JN, England

This is the best zine listing ever produced putting both the Zine Register and 20 Years On to shame. Imagine a writing collective with the irreverence of Bruce Geryk but the love of the hobby of Conrad von Metzke. Excellent.

ECU RECIPE CORNER

CUBAN BLACK BEANS AND RICE

Serves 6

4 cans black beans	1 medium green pepper, chopped
3 tablespoons olive oil or butter	black pepper to taste
2 garlic cloves, minced or pressed	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped fresh parsley
1 cup chopped onions	1 cup tomato juice or orange juice
1 teaspoon ground cumin	2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 teaspoon ground coriander seeds	6 cups cooked brown rice
1 teaspoon paprika	one jar salsa/hot sauce
1 cup chopped carrots	1 cup sour cream

Drain the cooked beans and reserve the liquid

In a large skillet or sturdy saucepan, sauté the onions, garlic, and spices in the oil or butter until the onions are translucent. Add the carrots and sauté for 3 or 4 minutes. Add the green peppers and sauté for 5 minutes more. Add black pepper, parsley, juice, and tomatoes and simmer until the vegetables are tender.

Combine the drained black beans with the vegetable mixture. Purée 2 to 3 cups of the bean-vegetable mixture in the blender with enough reserved liquid (or stock or water) to make a smooth purée. Stir the purée into the beans and simmer for 10 minutes.

Serve the beans on hot rice and top with salsa/hot sauce and a dollop of sour cream.

NEXTWEEKCREOLEBEANSPERHAPSDIDISAYNEXTWEEKIMEANTNEXTISSUEOFCOURSESILLYMBOHWELL

This was the recipe we cooked at Tomatocon. Unfortunately, since we were back so late from Brattleboro, most people were already too stuffed with burgers and franks to try the meal by the time we finally finished it. Well, now you can try it in the comfort of your own home!

This month's recipe is plagiarised from "New Recipes From Moosewood Restaurant" by the Moosewood Collective and published by Ten Speed Press. It's a quite eclectic mixture of different cuisines, ranging from Indian to Eastern European, Japanese to Mexican. It's fairly mainstream vegetarian, including both dairy and fish dishes. It should be an excellent addition to any cook's bookshelf.

MARKLILLELEHTYAYANDREWENGLANDBOOMARKLILLELEHTYAYANDREWENGLANDBOOMARKLILLELEHT

More British zine plugs...

Greatest Hits: Pete Birks, 38 Highlands Court, Highland Road, London, SE19 1DS, England

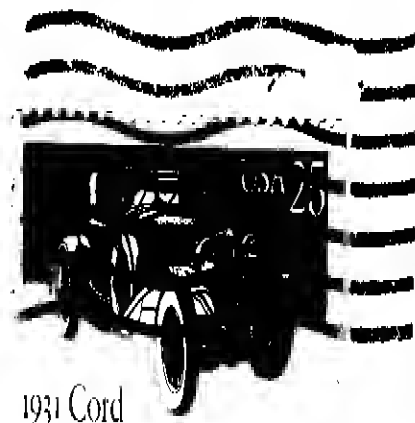
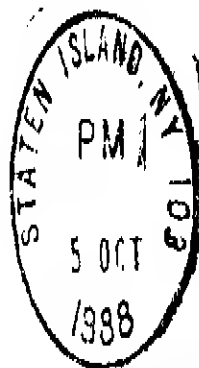
Pete Birks is an old hobby fart who is getting back into his stride with his third incarnation of Greatest Hits. To attempt a comparison with current American zines, GH is an analytical zine (like benzene) though the subjects covered are slightly different; there's less philosophy and party politics in GH but more book reviews, computer game rambling, hobby news and cockery comments. Highly recommended.

SIMON BILLENNESS & BARBARA PASSOFF

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USA



YOUR CREDIT IS: TRADE

Unveiling a new program for prenatal care for poor women, Mr. Dukakis posed on a stage with pink and blue balloons and with a politically correct collection of adorable babies: one white, one black and one Hispanic.

Larry Peery

Box 8416

San Diego, CA 92102-0416

Darla Danilowicz, a 25-year-old

mother, was telling the crowd that the program, which Mr. Dukakis enacted in Massachusetts, had saved the life of her 10-month-old baby, Rachel, when the less-than-grateful baby decided to get into a staring contest with the Governor.

She stared at him. He stared back. Several moments passed with the two locked in a determined gaze. Finally, Mr. Dukakis blinked, turned away and shrugged.

A murmur went through the crowd. If Rachel could make Mr. Dukakis blink, what would happen when he locked eyes with Mikhail Gorbachev?

DEADLINE: Saturday, October 22nd 1988